

## VOS – TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

**Kenneth M. Laustsen, CF**

VOS-TF Member at Large, 16 Mae Terrace, Waterville, ME 04901

[ken.laustsen@maine.gov](mailto:ken.laustsen@maine.gov)

In December 2002, the Society of American Foresters (SAF) Council chartered the Volunteer Organizational Structure – Task Force (VOS-TF) with three objectives:

- 1) To evaluate the implementation success of the 1994 VOS TF report.
- 2) To evaluate the effectiveness of the current organizational structure in meeting the mission and strategic direction of the Society of American Foresters.
- 3) To recommend changes to improve the vitality and effectiveness of the organization.

Due to other intervening SAF conflicts, the task force roster was not finalized until August 2003, and SAF Council amended the charter for a completion date and report by December 2004. The 37-page report was submitted to SAF Council on December 4, 2004.

The VOS-TF reiterates its view that the recommended changes in SAF organizational structure and to broaden the scope of the forestry professional and the related membership of the SAF are vital to the future sustainability of SAF and the forestry profession. We urge the Council and SAF leadership to address them with utmost urgency.

Because of the number and nature of changes that it proposes, the VOS-TF suggests to Council that the first step in evaluating and implementing the recommendations should be a joint process that includes both Council and broader SAF leadership. This joint process is critical to ensure accurate understanding of what is proposed, to build leadership consensus in support of them, and to create a united message that is delivered with conviction to SAF members from their leaders.

It is the VOS-TF estimate that the implementation phase could take approximately 1 year to understand and gain acceptance and then 1 to 2 years for the subsequent implementation transition. It will require a membership referendum to alter the SAF constitution.

The recommendations are proffered so that SAF can regain its role as a strong and relevant organization for professional forestry and forest resources management.

### **Literature Cited**

Smith, D.W. Chair. **Volunteer Organizational Structure Task Force – A Report to the SAF Council.** December 4, 2004.